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For Immediate Release  
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**Environment Department Issues a “BOIL WATER ORDER” for Twin Forks  
Water Association**

(Santa Fe, NM) – The New Mexico Environment Department’s (NMED) Drinking Water Bureau has advised the Twin Forks Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (Twin Forks MDWCA) to issue a “boil water order” for its customers.

The Twin Forks MDWCA serves approximately 200 year-round residents in a community located approximately 15 miles east of Alamogordo in Otero County. The Association’s water system was put on a “boil water order” today, September 16, 2005, due to bacteriological contamination that exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for *E.coli*. NMED required that the system owner and operator notify all customers served by the system of this finding.

Consumers of the Twin Forks MDWCA are advised to boil water for five minutes before drinking, cooking, and dishwashing.

The presence of *E.coli* in water indicates that the water may have been in contact with sewage or animal wastes, and could contain disease-causing organisms. Most strains of *E. coli* are harmless and live in the intestines of healthy humans and animals. However, a positive test for *E. coli* in the drinking water supply may indicate the presence of dangerous strains of *E. coli* or other disease-causing organisms, which are sometimes found in sewage or animal wastes. These types of organisms may cause severe gastrointestinal illness and, in rare cases, even death. Children, the elderly, and immuno-compromised individuals are at an increased risk for illness.

Actions have been and will further be initiated to identify the possible source(s) of contamination, complete any mechanical repairs if applicable, establish acceptable disinfection, and flush out the water system. In addition, the Drinking Water Bureau will continue to assist with troubleshooting to identify the source of the problem along with the assistance of their contractor, New Mexico Rural Water Association.

The New Mexico Department of Health has also been notified and will remain on alert for any health effects linked to this water quality issue. Consumers of the water system may call (505) 827-0006, if they have any water-related health concerns.

For more information contact Mike Huber, DWB-DII Manager, at (505) 476-8638 or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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